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Letter from William McKinney to His Cousin Martha McKinney, August 5, 1863

William M. McKinney

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Newtown Ind Aug 5th 1863

Cousin Mattie-

Yours of the 29th ult. received yesterday evening- though
scarcely able to sit-up this morning- I will try and answer it- For more
than two weeks past- I have had the chills and fever every day- and heavy
night sweats every night- I have taken a vast amount of medicine-
and yet can get nothing to act upon them and break them up- The
physicians say they are ~~acute~~ febrile chills- caused by debility- bad blood-
and a generally diseased system- and very difficult to get clear of-
If I do not get them broken up soon- they will break me up entirely.
Yesterday afternoon I had but a slight chill- but about five hours of
high fever- last night could not rest for coughing- spit-up some
blood during the night- this morning I am so weak and
dizzy headed- I can scarcely move about- I suppose I will have
another chill this afternoon- I am a great deal weaker and
poorer in flesh than when at your house- I am not worth
a cent to anybody- and worth less to myself-

I cannot find any physicians that seem to know anything about my disease - or who treat me with any success - all they do - is done by way of experiment - they saying - that perhaps such and such results will follow - well - I am getting tired of being experimented on - and that to - at the expense of my life - I am not now able to travel - if I was - I should start out to find some one that seemed to understand my constitution - I have taken medicine enough during the past month - to either kill or cure a dozen men - and all to no purpose -

I am now staying with Lizzie in ~~town~~ and have been for over a week - her husband is in Ill on business - but will return the last of this week - I wish I was back in Ohio now - you need not be surprised to see me step in one of these days - if I get the skills broken up and get able to travel - I am still in the service - I heard the other day from my payers - they were not drawing correctly in some particulars and were not approved - as soon as I get able to go to Indianapolis - I will send forward another paper and try it again - if I was only able to go to my Regt - I could soon get a resignation put through -

I should like to have been at your house while Penn was
there and while you and her were putting away wheat in the
barn - you must have seen a beautiful pair of suddenly looking lasses -
I presume the fun of the business soon wore off - and it was too much
like hard work to suit either of you - I hope you all enjoyed yourselves
satisfactorily over my juvenile letter that Abby was so kind as
to make a show of for your benefit - all right - you know I am
not easily scared or plagued - could have enjoyed a laugh at it
with you - but I been there - I had a long letter from Aunt Ann
a few days since - she wants me to come to Dayton and
try her Doctor. The folks at home are all well - except Father -
his ankles are so sore that he can scarcely walk at all -
Excuse this poor apology of a letter - I am so unwell that
I am in a poor condition for writing - cannot think
of anything - have no ideas - Write me soon again -
Love to all -

As ever

Wm. Linn